

Please oppose any further consolidation of media ownership in the United States. The coverage of the current crisis shows the shallowness and inadequacy of the American commercial television media especially. The owners of these facilities view news as entertainment and concentrate on costs rather than coverage.

Americans must rely on foreign broadcasts to get adequate news not only from Afghanistan but also from the rest of the world. Public broadcasting fills some of the huge gap left by the abdication of commercial media from adequate news coverage. However, in a democracy, there should be more than one reliable station for news coverage.

Newspapers also have proven themselves inadequate, devoting page after page to "human interest" stories yet, as in the case of the New York Times, coming in more than a week after the BBC in reporting the use of cluster bombs in Afghanistan.

Further consolidation of media empires whose capacity to report news already is seriously impaired by the wholesale importation of entertainment values into news coverage can only make the US media worse from an already bad state with regard to news.